A35
1
1

0
A35
1
1

WAR INFORMATION SERIES

No. 1 June, 1917

THE WAR MESSAGE AND FACTS BEHIND IT

ANNOTATED TEXT OF PRESIDENT WILSON'S MESSAGE, APRIL 2, 1917

M-2676-G
U.S.

Published by COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION, Washington, D. C.

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1917

Collected set.

D590
.A2A35

D. of D.
SEP 28 1917

FOREWORD.

THE "War Message" of President Wilson, delivered before Congress on April 2d, 1917, voices the best ideals and aspirations of the American people. It sets forth in language of dignity and moderation, but with unmistakable indignation and emphasis, the grievous wrongs which have made the United States take up arms against Germany. It makes very plain, even to the hitherto unconvinced, why at the present general crisis it is the duty of all good Americans to enter this war, "that the world may be made safe for democracy."

In other words, Mr. Wilson's message is the best possible preparation for all loyal Americans who are studying the causes and justification for the present war, and who are trying to discover the proper mental attitude they themselves should take toward the personal part which they may be called to play in the struggle.

Nevertheless, although the President was speaking in general to all good Americans, he was addressing, for the moment, Congress in particular. Now men at Washington, devoting all their time to public affairs, and most of them favored by long residence there and by special opportunities for information, did not need to be told of the many things which were not so obvious to even very intelligent citizens at home—at least unless the latter were willing to spend considerable time in various forms of investigation. Consequently Mr. Wilson speaks of a good many matters that need amplifying details if they are to be entirely clear, and he draws a number of inferences, very sound indeed, but again sometimes not self-explanatory to busy men and women. Also, here and there, he contrasts the American and Prussian political philosophy and methods of doing things in a way that would become even more convincing if he had been allowed time to enter into specific details. Solemn official promises made only to be broken, conspiracies to burn and blow up American industries, to hamper our manufactures and cripple our Government by strikes and riots, spies in every center of political and industrial activity, plans made on American soil and financed by German funds to dynamite canals, bridges, and munition factories in Canada, invitations to Mexico in times of peace to join with Germany in dismembering our Union, have led people and President alike to see submarine warfare as but a more flagrant expression of a German state policy running amuck in absolute disregard of every sense of national and international morals and decency and callous to the claims of common humanity.

A military autocracy astride the ruins of Europe and dominant on the seas by virtue of an arm that both serves and reveals its ambitions and irresponsibility has forced America to accept its challenge. A new Monroe Doctrine must be defended on the pathways of the seas and in the fields of Flanders if the Western World is to be preserved as the citadel of a free-developing, forward-looking democracy.

This annotated copy of the President's message has been prepared in the hope that it may make clearer the spirit and the facts back of a decision so momentous.

Many of the facts are very familiar to most Americans, but the effort has been to bring together in one place the chief lines of evidence which made Mr. Wilson say that he felt it his duty to urge Congress to declare that "the recent course of the German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the United States." Very many of the documents quoted in these notes have the highest official validity, and almost none of the facts mentioned are capable of dispute by any fair-minded person.

Taken all in all, these facts, supporting the message, and many more that of course could be added, constitute something like "the case for America against Germany," and Americans after examining this case may rest well assured that their cause will be justified by the calm, impartial verdict of later-day history.

The plan and much of the work are due to Prof. William Stearns Davis, of the history department of the University of Minnesota. He was very materially assisted by his colleagues, Prof. C. D. Allin and Dr. Wm. Anderson. Whether this evidence is valid can be tested by anybody with access to a good public library, for no secret documents have been used. The annotations represent a wholly volunteer service on the part of competent and patriotic scholars.

The Committee on Public Information has had the assistance of the National Board for Historical Service in editing the manuscript.

The Committee believes that pending the appearance of a more elaborate and official Government statement, the publication of this annotated copy of the President's address will serve a real national purpose.

Copies of this document and of other publications may be had free on request.

For the Committee on Public Information.

GUY STANTON FORD,
Director of the Division on Civic and Educational Cooperation.

THE WAR MESSAGE AND FACTS BEHIND IT.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONGRESS:

I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy [1] to be made, and made immediately, which it is neither right nor constitutionally permissible [2] that I should assume the responsibility of making.

[1] There had been only two other periods in the history of the country equally serious—1776 and 1861. Nobody can pretend that there have been any other crises in American history (barring the Revolution and the Civil War) when so much that citizens of this country count dear has been at stake. The War of 1812, the Mexican and Spanish Wars, seem as child's play beside the present exigency. Now, as this message makes clear, the very liberties of the world and the possibilities of peaceful democracies are at stake. If Germany should win this war, and thus become supreme on land and sea, the very existence of free democracies would be imperiled.

[2] President Wilson had the sworn duty to lay the facts before Congress and recommend to it the needful action. The Constitution of the United States prescribes his duties in such emergencies.

It is worthy of note that the Constitution lays this duty and power of declaring war directly upon Congress, and that it can not be evaded by Congressmen by any referendum to the voters, for which not the slightest constitutional provision is made.

Congress performed this duty by voting on the war question as requested. The vote of the Senate was 82 to 6 for war; of the House 373 to 50. Such comparative unanimity upon so momentous a question is almost unparalleled in the history of free nations.

On the 3d of February last I officially laid before you **the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government, that** on and after the 1st day of February **it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or of humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean.**[3] That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial Government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft, in conformity with **its promise,**

then given to us,[4] that passenger boats should not be sunk, and that due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy, when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care taken that their crews were given at least a fair chance to save their lives in their open boats. The precautions taken were meager and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed.[5]

[3] The German Chancellor in announcing this repudiation of all his solemn pledges in the Imperial Parliament (Reichstag), on January 31, frankly admitted that this policy involved "ruthlessness" toward neutrals. "When the most ruthless methods are considered the best calculated to lead us to victory and to a swift victory * * * they must be employed. * * * The moment has now arrived. Last August [when he was, as he himself here admits, allowing the American people to believe that in response to its protest he had laid aside such ruthless methods] the time was not yet ripe, but to-day the moment has come when, with the greatest prospect of success, we can undertake this enterprise."

[4] The broken Sussex pledge. On May 4, 1916, the German Government, in reply to the protest and warning of the United States following the sinking of the Sussex, gave this promise: That **"merchant vessels** both within and without the area declared a naval war zone **shall not be sunk without warning,** and without saving human lives, unless the ship attempt to escape or offer resistance."

Germany added, indeed, that if Great Britain continued her blockade policy, she would have to consider "a new situation."

On May 8, 1916, the United States replied that it could not admit that the pledge of Germany was "in the slightest degree contingent upon the conduct of any other Government" (i. e., on any question of the English blockade). To this Germany made no reply at all, and under general diplomatic usage, when one nation makes a statement to another, the latest statement of the case stands as final unless there is a protest made.

The promise made by Germany thus **became a binding pledge,** and as such was torn up with other "scraps of paper" by the German "unlimited submarine warfare" note of January 31, 1917.

[5] As to the proper usages in dealing with merchant vessels in war, here are the rules laid down some time ago for the American Navy (a fighting navy, surely), and these rules hardly differed in other navies, including the Russian and Japanese:

United States Naval War Code, now in preparation, retains and amplifies the following provisions of the Code published in 1900 (p. 48):

"The personnel of a merchant vessel captured as a prize * * * are entitled to their personal effects.

"All passengers not in the service of the enemy, and all women and children on board such vessels should be released and landed at a convenient port at the first opportunity.

"Any person in the naval service of the United States who pillages or **maltreats in any manner,** any person found on board a merchant vessel captured as a prize, **shall** be severely punished."

United States Naval War College, *International Law Topics*, 1905, page 62: "If a seized neutral vessel can not for any reason be brought into court for adjudication it should be dismissed."

United States Naval War Code, on safety required for persons on a captured vessel (United States Naval War College, *International Law Topics*, 1913, p. 165): "The destruction of a vessel which has surrendered without first removing its officers and crew would be an act contrary to the sense of right which prevails even between enemies in time of war."

And also Lawrence (standard authority on international law), *International Law*, 1910 edition, page 484: "It is better for a naval officer to release a ship as to which he is doubtful than to risk personal punishment and international complications by destroying innocent property."

The new policy has swept every restriction aside. **Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag,** their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom **without warning and without thought of help or mercy** for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even **hospital ships** and **ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium,**[6] though the latter were provided with safe conduct through the proscribed areas by the German Government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle.

[6] Mr. Wilson was undoubtedly thinking of the cases of the British hospital ships *Asturias* sunk March 20, and the *Gloucester Castle*. These vessels had been sunk although protected by the most solemn possible of international compacts. The Germans seem to have acknowledged the sinking of the *Asturias* and to have regarded their feat with great complacency. Somewhat earlier in the war the great liner *Britannic* had been sunk while in service as a hospital ship, and the evidence seems to be it was torpedoed by a U-boat, although the proof here is not conclusive. Since this message was written the Germans have continued their policy of murdering more wounded soldiers and their nurses by sinking more hospital ships.

The Belgian relief ships referred to were probably the *Camilla*, *Trevier*, and the *Feistein*, but most particularly the large Norwegian steamer *Storstad*, sunk with 10,000 tons of grain for the starving Belgians. Besides these sinkings, two other relief ships—the *Tunisie* and the *Haelen*—were attacked unsuccessfully.

I was for a little while unable to believe that such things would in fact be done by any Government that had hitherto subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations.[7] International law had its origin in the attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the seas, where no nation had right of dominion and where lay the free highways of the world. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up with meager enough results,

indeed, after all was accomplished that could be accomplished, but always with a clear view, at least, of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded.

[7] No nation assuredly has made prouder claims than Germany to a superior "kultur," or made louder assertions of its desire to vindicate "the freedom of the seas."

This minimum of right the German Government has swept aside under the plea of retaliation and necessity and because it had no weapons which it could use at sea except these, which it is impossible to employ, as it is employing them, without throwing to the wind all scruples of humanity or of respect for the understandings that were supposed to underlie the intercourse of the world.

I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious as that is, but **only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of noncombatants, men, women, and children,** engaged in pursuits which have always, even in **the darkest periods of modern history,**[8] been deemed innocent and legitimate. **Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people can not be.** The present German submarine warfare against commerce is **a warfare against mankind.**

[8] Mr. Wilson could have gone further back than "modern history."

Even in the most troubled period of the Middle Ages there was consistent effort to spare the lives of nonbelligerents. Thus in the eleventh century not merely did the church enjoin the "truce of God" which ordered all warfare to cease on four days of the week, but it especially pronounced its curse upon those who outraged or injured not merely clergymen and monks, but **all classes of women.** We also have ordinances from this "dark period" of history forbidding the interference with shepherds and their flocks, the damaging of olive trees, or the carrying off or destruction of farming implements. All this at a period when feudal barons are alleged to have been waging their wars with unusual ferocity.

Contrast also with the German usages this American instance:

On May 12, 1898, Admiral Sampson with the American fleet appeared before San Juan, P. R., and conducted a reconnoissance in force to see if Cervera's squadron was in the port, but he did not "subject the city to a regular bombardment" because that "would have required due notice" for the removal of the women, children, and the sick. He did this notwithstanding the fact that a sudden attack, well driven home, would probably have given him the city. In the attack on the forts alone, which he actually made, his ship captains were carefully charged to avoid hitting the Spanish military hospital. (See H. Doc. No. 12, 55th Cong., 3d sess., p. 368.)

No one certainly has ever accused the American Navy of "hitting soft" or of being unwilling to wage the most strenuous kind of **honorable** warfare.

It is a war against all nations. **American ships have been sunk,**[9] **American lives taken,**[10] in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of, but **the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations**[11] have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination.

[9] American vessels sunk by submarines following German decree of ruthless submarine policy, Jan. 31, 1917.

Following eight or more American vessels which had been sunk or attacked earlier, in most cases in contravention to international law, these ships also had been sunk following the repudiation of her pledges by Germany:

February 3, 1917, *Housatonic.*
February 13, 1917, *Lyman M. Law.*
March 16, 1917, *Vigilancia.*
March 17, 1917, *City of Memphis.*
March 17, 1917, *Illinois.*
March 21, 1917, *Healdton* (claimed to have been sunk off Dutch coast, and far from the so-called "prohibited zone.")
April 1, 1917, *Aztec.*
March 2, 1917, *Algonquin.*

Furthermore, no American should forget the sinking of the *William P. Frye* on January 28, 1915, by a German raider. This act under normal circumstances would be a casus belli. The raider, the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*, then impudently took refuge in an American port.

[10] American lives lost on the ocean during the war. (See Cong. Rec., 65th Cong., 1st sess., p. 1006.)

American lives have been lost during the sinking of at least 20 vessels, whereof 4 were American, 1 Dutch, and 1 Norwegian. In one or two cases the vessel tried to escape and made resistance, and the loss of life was possibly excusable for the Germans. In the bulk of the cases the destruction was without fair warning and without reasonable effort to give the passengers and crew chance to escape.

Among the more flagrant cases were:

May 7, 1915, *Lusitania*, 114 Americans lost.
August 19, 1915, *Arabic*, 3 Americans lost.
September 4, 1915, *Hesperian*, 1 American lost.
October 28, 1916, *Marina*, 8 Americans lost.
December 14, 1916, *Russian*, 17 Americans lost.
February 26, 1917, *Laconia*, 8 Americans lost.
March 16, 1917, *Vigilancia*, 5 Americans lost (United States).
March 21, 1917, *Healdton*, 7 Americans lost (United States).
April 1, 1917, *Aztec*, 28 Americans lost (United States).

Some on *Aztec* probably not American citizens, although she was a regular American ship.

In all, up to declaration of war by us, 226 **American citizens, many of them women and children, had lost their lives** by the action of German submarines, and in most instances without the faintest color of international right.

[11] The Norwegian Legation at London has announced that during February and March, 1917, 105 **Norwegian vessels** of over 228,000 tons have been sunk, and 106 persons thereon killed, and 222 are missing.

On February 22, 1917, seven Dutch vessels which left an English port on promise of "relative security" from the Berlin authorities were all attacked by German

U-boats and six of them were sunk. Germany has admitted that its boats did the deed, and has expressed "regrets" to Holland, although adding blandly "the incident proves how dangerous it is to navigate the prohibited zone, and gives expression to our wish that neutral navigators remain in their ports." As a result of this policy of terrorism, the ships of Holland have been practically driven off the seas. Many of them have taken refuge in harbors of the United States.

Spaniards have been exasperated by the destruction of their vessels, the most recent instance being that of a Spanish ship, with a Spanish cargo, sunk in Spanish waters. Swedish over-sea commerce is practically ruined by the fear of their owners at the indiscriminate ruthlessness of the submarine.

The United States Government made an official estimate that by April 3, 1917, **no less than 686 neutral vessels had been sunk by German submarines since the beginning of the war. This did not include any American vessels.** (*New York Times History of the War*, May, 1917, pp. 239 and 241.)

The challenge is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it.[12] The choice we make for ourselves must be made with a moderation of counsel and a temperateness of judgment befitting our character and our motives as a Nation. We must put excited feelings away. Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the Nation, but only **the vindication of right,**[13] of human right, of which we are only a single champion.

[12] Practically all the civilized neutral countries of the earth have protested at the German policy. Some, like Brazil, China, Bolivia, and Guatemala, have broken diplomatic relations with Germany.

The neutral states of Europe, fearful of being caught in the horrors of the great war, have protested just as far as they have dared. Holland and Denmark may, of course, at any time see a German Army over their borders. Norway and Sweden are hardly in a safe position, but they have made their vehement protest at the German outrages. Spain, which had exercised a forbearance similar to that of the United States, has finally, after futile protests, been obliged (May 18, 1917) to send Germany a note in the nature of an ultimatum, demanding reparation for the past and guaranties for the future.

[13] Submarines are such exceptional instruments of warfare that it is held by authorities on international law that they ought never to submerge in neutral waters, otherwise it is impossible for a neutral to control them and be responsible for them as with ordinary visiting warships.

Says Prof. Theodore S. Woolsey, of Yale, a very high authority:

" * * * I think there can be no doubt that the U-boat is to be regarded as a surface cruiser with no additional rights and privileges and with the same duties and liabilities. Hence in neutral waters it should not submerge. Submergence imperils neutrality by making the performance of neutral duties more arduous and the evasion of neutral rights easier." (*American Journal of International Law*, January, 1917, p. 139.)

When I addressed the Congress on the 26th of February last I thought it would suffice to assert our neutral rights

with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against unlawful violence. But **armed neutrality, it now appears, is impracticable.**[14] Because submarines are in effect outlaws, when used as the German submarines have been used against merchant shipping, it is impossible to defend ships against their attacks, as the law of nations has assumed that merchantmen would defend themselves against privateers or cruisers, visible craft giving chase upon the open sea. It is common prudence in such circumstances, grim necessity indeed, to endeavor to destroy them before they have shown their own intention. They must be dealt with upon sight, if dealt with at all.

[14] In 1798, on account of the attacks on our commerce by French cruisers and privateers, Congress empowered President John Adams to arm merchant vessels, to let them defend themselves, and to let our warships attack the offending French vessels.

There were several really serious naval battles (especially when the U. S. S. *Constellation* took the French frigate *L'Insurgente*, 1799), and international experts are of the opinion that very probably an actual state of war existed. In any case the country was headed straight into war, and preparations were being made to raise a strong army with Washington again as commander. Then at the last moment, Napoleon, who had just come to power, had the wisdom to offer terms President Adams could accept. The German Imperial Government had no such wisdom or restraint.

The German Government denies the right of neutrals to use arms at all within the areas of the sea which it has proscribed **even in the defense of rights which no modern publicist has ever before questioned** [15] their right to defend. The intimation is conveyed that the armed guards which we have placed on our merchant ships will be treated as beyond the pale of law and subject to be dealt with as pirates would be. Armed neutrality is ineffectual enough at best; in such circumstances and in the face of such pretensions it is worse than ineffectual; it is likely only to produce what it was meant to prevent; it is practically certain to draw us into war without either the rights or the effectiveness of belligerents. There is one choice we can not make, we are incapable of making: **we will not choose the path of submission** and suffer **the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated.**[16] The

wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.

[15] Before the outbreak of the war the following were the standing orders in the German Navy for dealing with even enemy merchant vessels, and if that was the case how much more consideration should be given to neutrals. The new German orders are a brazen contradiction of their own previous precepts.

General orders of German Admiralty staff, Berlin, June 22, 1914. (Note date.)

"If an armed enemy merchant vessel offers armed resistance . . . such resistance is to be overcome with all means available. . . . **The crew are to be taken prisoners of war.** The passengers are to be left to go free unless it appears that they participated in the resistance." (*German Prize Code*, p. 75, par. 116.)

"Before proceeding to the destruction of the [neutral] vessel [which has been seized for proper reason], the safety of all persons on board, and, so far as possible, their effects, is to be provided for . . ." (*German Prize Code*, p. 68.)

Dr. Wehberg (great German authority on international law, quoted in *American Journal of Int. Law*, Oct. 1916, p. 871).

"The enemy merchant ship has the right of defense against enemy attack, and this right it can exercise against 'visit' (i. e., being stopped and investigated), for this indeed is the first act of capture. The attacked merchant ship can indeed itself seize the overpowered warship as a prize."

And still again—

In Oxford, 1913, at a meeting of the Institute of International Law, at which the representatives of Germany, as well as of all other great nations, were present, it was decided as a firm principle that private vessels may not commit acts of hostility against the enemy and that they may defend themselves against the attack of an enemy vessel. (*American Journal of International Law*, vol. 10, 1916, p. 868.)

[16] Right of American citizens to protection in their doings abroad and on the seas no less than at home. Decided by Supreme Court of United States. (Slaughter House Cases, 16 Wall., 36.)

"**Every citizen . . . may demand the care and protection of the United States** when on the high seas or within the jurisdiction of a foreign Government."

See Cooley's *Principles of Constitutional Law*, third edition, page 273 (standard authority).

Obviously a Government which can not or will not protect its citizens against a policy of lawless murder is unworthy of respect abroad or obedience at home. The protection of the lives of the innocent and law-abiding is clearly the **very first** duty of a civilized state.

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact **nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States;**[17] that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense, but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources

to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

[17] Wars do not have to be declared in order to exist. The mere commission of warlike or unfriendly acts commences them. Thus the first serious clash in the Mexican war took place April 24, 1846. Congress "recognized" the state of war only on May 11 of that year. Already Gen. Taylor had fought two serious battles at Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma.

Many other like cases could be cited; the most recent was the outbreak of the war between Japan and Russia. In 1904 the Japanese attacked the Russian fleet before Port Arthur, and only several days after this battle was war "recognized."

If the acts of Germany were unfriendly war in the strictest sense existed when the President addressed Congress.

What this will involve is clear. It will involve the utmost practicable cooperation in counsel and action with the Governments now at war with Germany, and as incident to that, the extension to those Governments of the most liberal financial credits, in order that our resources may so far as possible be added to theirs.

It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country to supply the materials of war and serve the incidental needs of the Nation in the most abundant and yet the most economical and efficient way possible.

It will involve the immediate full equipment of the Navy in all respects, but particularly in supplying it with the best means of dealing with the enemy's submarines.

It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States,[18] already provided for by law in case of war, of at least 500,000 men, who should, in my opinion, be chosen upon the principle of universal liability to service, and also the authorization of subsequent additional increments of equal force so soon as they may be needed and can be handled in training.

It will involve also, of course, the granting of adequate credits [18] to the Government, sustained, I hope, so far as they can equitably be sustained by the present generation, by well-conceived taxation.

[18] Bills passed by Congress, with dates on which they were presented to President:
Apr. 5. S. J. Res. 1...Declaration of war.
17. H. R. 12.....Deficiency appropriation bill for the year ending June, 1917.
23. H. R. 2762...Bond-issue bill.
23. H. R. 2339...Increasing number of midshipmen at Annapolis.

Apr. 23. H. R. 2008...Extending minority enlistments in the Navy.
23. H. R. 2338...Authorizing additional officers for Hydrographic Office.
23. H. R. 2300...Increasing age limit for officers in Naval Reserve.
23. H. R. 1771...Amending naval appropriations act for the year ending June, 1917.
May 5. H. R. 2893...Permitting foreign governments to enlist their nationals residing in the United States.
10. S. J. Res. 42..Authorizing seizure of interned German ships.
11. H. R. 13.....Army appropriation bill for the year ending June, 1918.
15. H. R. 2337...Enrollments of aliens in the Naval Reserve.
16. H. R. 3330...Increasing Navy and Marine Corps to 150,000 men.
18. S. 1871.....Conscription bill.

Bills in conference on May 17:

Apr. 16. H. R. 11.....Sundry civil appropriations for the year ending June, 1918.
16. H. R. 10.....Military Academy appropriations for the year ending June, 1918.
May 15. S. 2.....Espionage bill.

Bills awaiting action of one House:

S. 383.....Passed Senate Apr. 9, punishing the destruction of war material.
H. R. 328.....Passed House May 9, car shortage.
H. R. 3971.....Passed House May 2, special war appropriation bill.

I say sustained so far as may be equitable by taxation, because it seems to me that it would be most unwise to base the credits, which will now be necessary, entirely on money borrowed. It is our duty, I most respectfully urge, to protect our people, so far as we may, against the very serious hardships and evils which would be likely to arise out of the inflation which would be produced by vast loans.

In carrying out the measures by which these things are to be accomplished we should keep constantly in mind the wisdom of interfering as little as possible in our own preparation and in the equipment of our own military forces with the duty—for it will be a very practical duty—of supplying the nations already at war with Germany with the materials which they can obtain only from us or by our assistance. **They are in the field, and we should help them in every way to be effective there.**[19]

[19] To anyone who will reflect upon the subject, it will soon appear to be preposterous folly to suggest that we "go it alone" against Germany, and to fail to give all possible aid to her original enemies. Obviously unless we send munitions, troops, submarine chasers, etc., to France, England, and possibly Russia, since the German high-sea fleet does not at present come out, the war for us will mean little more than calling names across the Atlantic—until the European war is ended, and then if Germany has a pound of strength left (and very possibly she might be victorious) she can vent on us all her hate and fury, and exact from us the indemnities she can not wring from a bankrupt Europe.

So obvious is the military necessity of giving every possible help to the present enemies of Germany that those who try to thwart this are almost open to the very grave criminal charge of giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States.

I shall take the liberty of suggesting, through the several executive departments of the Government, for the consideration of your committees, measures for the accomplishment of the several objects I have mentioned. I hope that it will be your pleasure to deal with them as having been framed after very careful thought by the branch of the Government upon whom the responsibility of conducting the war and safeguarding the Nation will most directly fall.

While we do these things, these deeply momentous things, **let us be very clear, and make very clear to all the world, what our motives and our objects are.** My own thought has not been driven from its habitual and normal course by the unhappy events of the last two months, and I do not believe that the thought of the Nation has been altered or clouded by them. I have exactly the same things in mind now that I had in mind when I addressed the Senate on the 22d of January last; the same that I had in mind when I addressed Congress on the 3d of February and on the 26th of February.[20]

[20] On January 22 Mr. Wilson spoke in favor of a league to secure peace. On February 3 he announced he had broken diplomatic relations with Germany, but expressed the earnest hope that issues would not proceed to a clash of arms. On February 26 he asked for "armed neutrality," but still avoided an actual state of war.

Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power, and to set up among the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth insure the observance of those principles.

Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples, and **the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments,**[21] **backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people.** We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at **the beginning of an age** in which it will be insisted that **the same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among**

nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states.[22]

[21] Contrast these two standards: Bethmann-Hollweg addressing the Reichstag, August 4, 1914:

"We are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law. Our troops have occupied (neutral) Luxemburg and perhaps already have entered Belgium territory. Gentlemen, this is a breach of international law. The wrong—I speak openly—the wrong we hereby commit we will try to make good as soon as our military aims have been attained.

"He who is menaced as we are, and is fighting for his highest possession, can only consider how he is to hack his way through."

Or Frederick the Great again, the arch prophet of Prussianism, speaking in 1740 and giving the keynote to all his successors, "The question of right is an affair of ministers. * * * It is time to consider it in secret, for the orders to my troops have been given," and still, again, "Take what you can; you are never wrong unless you are obliged to give back." (Perkins, *France under Louis X V*, vol. 1, pp. 169–170.)

Against this set the words of the first President of the Young American Republic, speaking at a time when the Nation was so weak that surely any kind of shifts could have been justified on the score of necessity.

Said George Washington in his first inaugural address (1789):

". . . the foundation of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality, and the preeminence of free government be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens and command the respect of the world. I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction which an ardent love for my country can inspire, since there is no truth more thoroughly established than that there exists in the economy and course of nature an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness; between duty and advantage; between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity; since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained; and since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered, perhaps, as *deeply*, as *finally*, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people."

The present war is for a large part being waged to settle whether the American or the Prussian standard of morality is valid.

[22] The autocratic spirit of the German Emperor is clearly revealed in his own utterances (cf. p. 17). The Imperial Government is in form a government by the Emperor and the Imperial Diet. The dominant factor in the latter is the Federal Council (Bundesrat), appointed by the kings and princes. Here as King of Prussia, William II can make or break any policy. Prussia is the controlling factor, political, economic, and military, in modern Germany. In area it constitutes two-thirds of Germany, and five-eighths of its population and two-thirds of the members of the lower house of the German Congress are Prussians. Within Prussia there is little limit on the power of William II. In a constitution which his great-uncle "decreed" in 1850 the rights of the King and of the "Junkers" (the feudal military nobles east of the Elbe) are carefully guarded.

The constitution of Prussia has remained practically unchanged and the electoral districts and three class voting system of nearly 70 years ago still exist. Liberal industrial and socialistic elements in the great modern cities and manufacturing areas are without adequate representation in the Prussian Diet, and the old country districts are practically "rotten boroughs" where the peasant who votes by voice,

not written ballot, is at the mercy of his feudal noble landlord. It is the latter who back the throne and its autocratic power so long as the policy suits their narrow provincial militaristic views formed in the days of Frederick the Great and his despotic father and revived and glorified by Bismarck.

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling toward them but one of sympathy and friendship. **It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering the war.**[23] **It was not with their previous knowledge or approval.**[24] It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old unhappy days, when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and **wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties**[25] or of little groups of ambitious men **who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools.**

[23] When the crisis was precipitated late in July, 1914, there was a strong peace-party in Germany, and earnest protests were made against letting Austrian aggression against Serbia start a world conflagration. In Berlin on July 29, 28 mass meetings were held to denounce the proposed war, and one of them is said to have been attended by 70,000 men. The *Vorwaerts* (the great organ of the socialists) declared on that day, "the indications proved beyond a doubt that the camarilla of war lords is working with absolutely unscrupulous means to carry out their fearful designs to precipitate an international war and to start a world-wide fire to devastate Europe." On the 31st this same paper asserted that the policy of the German Government was "utterly without conscience." Then came the declaration of "war emergency" (*Kriegsgefahr*), mobilization, martial law, and any expression of public opinion was stilled in Germany.

[24] The German people had not the slightest share in shaping the events which led up to the declaration of war. The German Emperor is clothed by the imperial constitution with practically autocratic power in all matters of foreign policy. The Reichstag has not even a consultative voice in such matters. The German constitution (art. 11) gives to the Emperor specific power to "declare war, conclude peace, and enter into alliances." The provision that only defensive wars may be declared by the Emperor alone puts the power in his hands to declare this and any other war without consulting any but the military group, for no power in modern times has ever admitted that it waged aggressive warfare. William II declared this war without taking his people into the slightest confidence until the final deed was done.

The whole tendency of responsible German statesmen has been to ignore the people in foreign affairs. The retired chancellor, Prince von Bülow, defended this policy bluntly on the ground that the Germans were not capable of self-government, saying "We are not a political people."

As for William II, speeches without number can be cited to show his sense of his own autocratic authority—e. g., speaking at Königsberg, in 1910—"Looking upon myself as the instrument of the Lord, regardless of the views and the opinions of the hour, I go on my way." And another time: "There is but one master in this country; it is I, and I will bear no other." He has also been very fond of transforming an old Latin adage, making it read: "The will of the king is the highest law."

[25] President Wilson probably had in mind such wars as those of Louis XIV, waged by that King almost solely for his own glory and interest and with extremely little

heed to the small benefit and great suffering they brought to France. The War of the Spanish Succession (begun in 1701) was particularly such a war. History, of course, contains a great many others begun from no worthier motive, including several conducted by Prussian and earlier by Philip II of Spain.

Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbor States with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest.[26] Such designs can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask questions. **Cunningly contrived plans of deception or aggression, carried, it may be from generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from the light only within the privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow and privileged class.** They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

[26] There is abundant evidence that the situation in Europe in July, 1914, was regarded by the German "jingo" party—Von Tirpitz, Bernhardi, et al.—as peculiarly favorable. Russia was busy rearming her army, and her railway system had not yet been properly developed for strategic purposes. France was vexed with labor troubles, a murder trial was heaping scandal upon one of her most famous statesmen, and her army was reported by her own statesmen as sadly unready. England seemed on the point of being plunged into a civil war by the revolt of a large fraction of Ireland.

Such a convenient crippling of all the three great rivals of Germany might never come again. The murder of the arch-duke of Austria at Serajevo came, therefore, as a most convenient occasion for a stroke which would either result in a great increase of Teutonic prestige or enable Germany to fight with every possible advantage.

There is official Italian evidence that Serbia would have been attacked by the Teutonic powers in August, 1913, if Italy had consented to help the scheme. Her refusal made the Austro-German warlords wait until July, 1914, when they felt the situation favorable enough to be able to strike without awaiting the aid of Italy. (Signor Giolitti, in Italian Parliament, Dec. 5, 1914.)

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations.[27] No autocratic Government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion. Intrigue would eat its vitals away; the plottings of inner circles who could plan what they would, and render account to no one, would be a corruption seated at its very heart. Only free people can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end, and

prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own.[28]

[27] The willingness of Prussian rulers to precipitate war and to throw aside ordinary considerations for peace is best illustrated, of course, by the famous "Ems incident" of 1870.

At that time Bismarck had decided that the quickest way to promote German unity and serve his political schemes was to precipitate a war with France. The inflamed state of public opinion in France against Prussia made the task easy for him. On July 13, 1870, he received a telegram from King William I, telling of an interview he had had with the French ambassador, about a very ticklish matter, and leaving it to Bismarck to decide what facts it was wise to give to the press.

Bismarck, after consulting Von Moltke as to the state of the army, deliberately cut down and sharpened the wording of the telegram from the King, very moderately phrased, so as to make it appear that a deliberate insult had been offered the French ambassador, and then gave out this text of the dispatch for publication. This so enraged Paris public opinion, that war was immediately declared.

Bismarck took great pride in this stroke, and the facts are related in all the standard German histories, as well as many others which copy them.

Bismarck always regarded the manner in which he precipitated this war as a masterpiece of statecraft. It remained a kind of glorious example of true public policy for the next generation of public men in Germany. (See the account by Bismarck himself in his memoirs translated as *Bismarck; The Man and the Statesman.*

[28] The great humanitarian aims of The Hague peace conferences of 1899 and 1907 were the limitation of armaments and the compulsory arbitration of international disputes. Unanimity among the world powers was essential to the success of both. None dared disarm unless all would do so. The great democracies, Great Britain, France, and the United States, favored both propositions, but **Germany, leading the opposition, prevented their adoption.** She agreed with reluctance to a convention for optional arbitration, but **refused at the second conference even to discuss disarmament.** [See Scott, James Brown, *The Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907*, I, index "Armaments" and "Arbitration."]

Does not every American feel that assurance has been added to our hope for the future peace of the world by the wonderful and heartening things that have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia? Russia was known by those who knew her best to have been always in fact democratic at heart in all the vital habits of her thought, in all the intimate relationships of her people that spoke their natural instinct, their habitual attitude toward life. **The autocracy** that crowned the summit of her political structure, long as it had stood and terrible as was the reality of its power, **was not in fact Russian in origin, character, or purpose,**[29] and now it has been shaken off and the great generous Russian people have been added, in all their native majesty and might, to the forces that are fighting for freedom in the world, for

justice, and for peace. Here is a fit partner for a league of honor.

[29] The whole autocratic régime has been imposed on a people whose instincts and institutions are fundamentally democratic. The deposed Romanoff dynasty began in an election among the nobles. Peter the Great and the more despotic of his successors created largely by imitation and adaptation of German bureaucracy the machinery with which they ruled. Underneath this un-Russian machinery of despotism Russian communal and local life has preserved itself with wonderful vitality.

During the Russian revolution of 1905–6 it was perfectly evident that the German Government was doing its uttermost to help the Czar and the old régime. The passage of revolutionary exiles into Germany was constantly hindered; many were arrested by the Prussian police, and all who succeeded in entering Germany were kept under constant espionage.

The Czar and the Kaiser were hand in glove to a large extent before the war broke out. The German White Paper, which was published at the outbreak of the war, containing telegrams which passed personally between Nicholas II and Wilhelm II, gives repeated appeals from one to the other as representatives of a common interest.

One of the things that have served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it **has filled our unsuspecting communities, and even our offices of government, with spies and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without, our industries, and our commerce.**[30] Indeed it is now evident that its spies were here even before the war began and it is unhappily not a matter of conjecture, but a fact proven in our courts of justice, that the intrigues which have more than once come perilously near to disturbing the peace and dislocating the industries of the country, have been carried on at the instigation, with the support, and even under the personal directions of official agents of the Imperial Government accredited to the Government of the United States.

[30] Besides undoubtedly many matters which from reasons of public policy the Government has still kept hidden, the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, when it presented the war resolution following the President's message, went on formal record as listing at least **21 crimes or unfriendly acts** committed upon our soil with the connivance of the German Government since the European war began. Among these were:

Inciting Hindoos within the United States to stir up revolts in India, and supplying them with funds for that end, contrary to our neutrality laws.

Running a fraudulent passport office for German reservists. This was supervised by Capt. von Papen of the German Embassy.

Sending German agents to England to act as spies, equipped with American passports.

Outfitting steamers to supply German raiders, and sending them out of American ports in defiance of our laws.

Sending an agent from the United States to try to blow up the International Bridge at Vanceboro, Me.

Furnishing funds to agents to blow up factories in Canada.

Five different conspiracies, some partly successful, to manufacture and place bombs on ships leaving United States ports. For these crimes a number of persons have been convicted, also Consul-General Bopp, of San Francisco (a very high German official accredited to the United States Government), has been convicted of plotting to cause bridge and tunnels to be destroyed in Canada.

Financing newspapers in this country to conduct a propaganda serviceable to the ends of the German Government.

Stirring up anti-American sentiment in Mexico and disorders generally in that country, to make it impossible for the United States to mix in European affairs.

[N. B.—This last, from a humanitarian standpoint, seems peculiarly outrageous. Germany had not the slightest grievance against the helpless Mexicans. To incite them to revolt against their own Government and to make war on the United States simply involved their misery and probable destruction, in return for a very doubtful and roundabout gain for Germany. The greatest wrong was not to the United States but to Mexico.]

German military usage has been quite in this spirit, however, and approves of such doings. (See *German War Code*, standard translation, p. 85.)

"Bribery of enemies' subjects, acceptance of offers of treachery, utilization of discontented elements in the population, support of pretenders and the like, are permissible; indeed, international law is in no way opposed to the exploitation of crimes of third parties."

This, of course, is an outrageous travesty of international law. The Hague conference declined to seem to add to the authority of a practice so repulsive by legislating upon the subject. What would the German people say of America, if our Government hired assassins to murder Kaiser Wilhelm or Von Hindenburg?

Even in checking these things and trying to extirpate them we have sought to put the most generous interpretation possible upon them because we knew that their source lay not in any hostile feeling or purpose of the German people toward us (who were, no doubt, as ignorant of them as we ourselves were), but only in the selfish designs of **a Government that did what it pleased and told its people nothing.** But they have played their part in serving to convince us at last that that Government entertains no real friendship for us, **and means to act against our peace and security at its convenience.**[31] That it means to stir up enemies against us at our very doors, **the intercepted note to the German minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence.**[32]

[31] A Prussianized Germany, triumphant in Europe and dominant on the seas, would find its occasion to strike down America in its isolation and make of us the over-seas tributary of a new Roman Empire. There can be no question that the future of democracy and of independent national life is hanging in the balance in this struggle.

[32] The famous "Zimmermann note," exposed by our Government March 1, is a document that should stick in the memories of all Americans. Remember, it was composed on January 19, 1917, at a time when Germany and America were officially very good friends, and the date was just three days before Mr. Wilson appeared in the Senate with his scheme for a league to assure peace and justice to the world.

Zimmermann admitted the authenticity of the note, and only deplored that it had been discovered. The significant parts were these:

"BERLIN, *January 19, 1917.*

"On February 1 we intend to begin submarine warfare unrestricted. In spite of this, it is our intention to keep neutral the United States of America.

"If this attempt is not successful, we propose an alliance on the following basis with Mexico: That we shall make war together and together make peace. We shall give general financial support, and it is understood that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. The details are left to you for settlement."

The rest of the dispatch tells the German minister in Mexico to open secret negotiations with Carranza the moment war with us is certain, and to get Carranza to draw in Japan.

Germany has attempted to apologize for this note by saying that it did not intend to do anything unless we first declared war. It is a complete retort that **decent nations do not go around preparing schemes for the dismemberment of other nations with which they are at peace,** and that Zimmermann's whole proposal sprang out of an evil conscience, because he realized that the submarine policy projected was so vile that the United States could not submit to it without utter loss of self-respect, and he did us the justice of believing we were not such extreme cravens as to refuse to fight.

The whole dispatch was so gross a revelation of international immorality that German-American papers immediately denounced it as a forgery, only to have its genuineness brazenly acknowledged and defended by Berlin.

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a Government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, **there can be no assured security for the democratic Governments of the world.**[33] **We are now about to accept the gage of battle with the natural foe to liberty,** and shall, if necesary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. We are glad now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretense about them, **to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included; for the rights of nations, great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience.**

[33] It is worthy of note that although nearly all the nations opposed to Germany concluded the so-called "cooling off" arbitration treaties with the United States, negotiated by Mr. Bryan, **Germany,** although indulging in certain meaningless talk

about "approving of the principle" of arbitration, etc., declined to join in the compacts.

There was no arbitration treaty that could be invoked when trouble arose with Germany.

On March 30, 1911, the German imperial chancellor had stated openly in the Reichstag that no general arbitration treaty would be useful for Germany, since it afforded no guarantee for a permanent peace. If conditions changed, from the time it was made, he said, then, "every arbitration treaty will burn like tinder and end in smoke." (Quoted in Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*, p. 33.)

The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquests, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.

Just because we fight without rancor and without selfish object, seeking nothing for ourselves but what we shall wish to share with all free people, we shall, I feel confident, conduct our operations as belligerents without passion and ourselves observe with proud punctilio the principles of right and of fair play we profess to be fighting for.[34]

[34] "Fair play" has small part in the Prussian military usage, however. (See *German War Code*, authorized translation, pp. 1–3 and 52.) J. Murray, London, 1915.

"A war conducted with energy can not be directed merely against the combatants of the enemy State and the positions they occupy, but will and must in like manner seek to destroy the total intellectual and material resources of the latter. Humanitarian claims, such as the protection of men and their goods, can only be taken into consideration in so far as the nature and object of the war permit."

See also Clausewitz (the Prussian military authority and oft-quoted oracle). Treatise "On War" (*Vom Kriege*) V: Kap. 14 (3).

Speaking of the desirability of crushing down an hostile country by requisitions, etc., he commends it because of "the fear of responsibility, punishment, and ill-treatment, which in such cases presses on the whole population like a general weight." This recourse (of requisitions) has **"no limits except those of the exhaustion, impoverishment, and devastation of the country."**

By this Prussian gospel, not merely is war inevitably "hell," but it is to be made deliberately the lowest stratum of hell, and the means of rendering it such are to be worked out with scientific precision.

I have said nothing of the Governments allied with the Imperial Government of Germany because they have not made war upon us or challenged us to defend our right and our honor. The **Austro-Hungarian Government has, indeed,**

avowed its unqualified indorsement and acceptance of the reckless and lawless submarine warfare,[35] adopted now without disguise by the Imperial German Government, and it has therefore not been possible for this Government to receive Count Tarnowski, the ambassador recently accredited to this Government by the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-Hungary; but that Government has not actually engaged in warfare against citizens of the United States on the seas, and I take the liberty, for the present at least, of postponing a discussion of our relations with the authorities at Vienna. We enter this war only where we are clearly forced into it because there are no other means of defending our rights.

[35] Austria had a serious clash with the United States in the *Ancona* case late in 1915, when Americans perished, thanks to the ruthless action of an Austrian submarine. In reply to American protests Austria promised to order her commanders to behave with humanity, and (compared, at least, to her German allies) she kept her word with reasonable exactness.

On April 8, however, Austria, probably acting under German pressure, broke off diplomatic relations with the United States without waiting for action by our Government, and the same was done a little later by Germany's other obedient vassal, the Sultan of Turkey.

It will be all the easier for us to conduct ourselves as belligerents in a high spirit of right and fairness because we act without animus, not with enmity toward a people or with the desire to bring any injury or disadvantage upon them, **but only in armed opposition to an irresponsible Government which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right and is running amuck.**

We are, let me say again, **the sincere friends of the German people** [36] and shall desire nothing so much as the early reestablishment of intimate relations of mutual advantage between us, however hard it may be for them for the time being to believe that this is spoken from our hearts. We have borne with their present Government through all these bitter months because of that friendship, **exercising a patience and forbearance which would otherwise have been impossible.**[37]

[36] There are now two Germanies—the old, noble, idealistic Germany; the new, hard, materialistic nation, created by Prussia. Americans would fain love and recall the former.

Here is what two of their own writers said, men of leadership and insight, speaking very shortly before the war:

Prof. Rein, of Jena: "A one-sidedness which only esteems material values and an increasing control over nature is destructive in its influence, and this one-sidedness set in during the nineteenth century in Germany. We Germans have ceased to be the nation of thinkers, poets, and dreamers, we aim now only at the domination and exploitation of nature."

And again Prof. Paulsen, of Berlin: "Two souls dwell in the German Nation. The German Nation has been called the nation of poets and thinkers, and it may be proud of the name. To-day it may again be called the nation of masterful combatants, as which it originally appeared in history."

[37] No one can accuse Mr. Wilson of the least precipitancy in bringing matters to an issue. Of course, on the contrary, his persistent attempts to bring the German Government to recognize the claims of reason and humanity have caused him to be bitterly criticised. Despite this criticism he has patiently and steadily held to the policy announced a year ago, "to wait until facts became unmistakable and were susceptible of only one interpretation." (*Sussex* note, April 18, 1916.)

Here is a partial list of the stages in the U-boat campaign:

1. December 24, 1914. Admiral von Tirpitz throws out hints in a newspaper interview of a wholesale torpedoing policy. He directly asks, "What will America say?" This was considerably before the so-called English blockade was causing Germany any serious food problem.

2. February 4, 1915. German Government proclaims a war zone within which any ship may be sunk unwarned.

3. February 10, 1915. Mr. Wilson tells German Government it will be held to "strict accountability" if any American rights are violated in this way.

4. May 1 (dated April 22), 1915. German Embassy publishes in New York morning papers warning against taking passage on ships which our Government had told the people they had a perfect right to take.

The *Lusitania* sailed at 12.20 noon, May 1.

5. May 7, 1915. Sinking of *Lusitania*.

6. May 13, 1915. Mr. Wilson's "first *Lusitania*" note.

7. May 28, 1915. Germany's reply defending the sinking of the *Lusitania*.

8. June 9, 1915. Mr. Wilson's "second *Lusitania*" note.

9. July 21, 1915. Mr. Wilson's "third *Lusitania*" note (following more unsatisfactory German rejoinders).

10. August 19, 1915. Sinking of the *Arabic*, whereupon Von Bernstorff gave an oral pledge for his Government that hereafter German submarines would not sink "liners" without warning.

11. February, 1916. (After still more debatable sinkings) Germany makes proposals looking toward "assuming liability" for the *Lusitania* victims, but the whole case is soon complicated again by the "armed ship" issue.

12. March 24, 1916. Sinking of the *Sussex*, passenger vessel with Americans on board.

13. April 10, 1916. Germany cynically tells United States she can not be sure whether she sunk the *Sussex* or not, although admitting one of her submarines was active close to the place of disaster.

14. April 18, 1916. President Wilson threatens Germany with breach of diplomatic relations if *Sussex* and similar incidents are repeated.

15. May 4, 1916. Germany grudgingly makes the promise that ships will not be sunk without warning.

16. October 8, 1916. German submarine appears off American coast and sinks British passenger steamer *Stephano* with many American passengers (vacationists returning from Newfoundland) on board. Loss of life almost certain had not American men-of-war been on hand to pick up the refugees.

[From this time until final break several other vessels sunk under circumstances which made it at least doubtful whether Germany was living up to her pledges.]

17. January 31, 1917. Germany tears up her promises and notifies Mr. Wilson she will begin "unrestricted submarine war."

18. February 3, 1917. Mr. Wilson gives Count Bernstorff his passports and recalls Ambassador Gerard from Berlin.

In all modern history it may be doubted if there is another chapter displaying such prolonged patience, forbearance, and conciliatoriness as that shown by Mr. Wilson and Mr. Lansing in the face of a long course of deliberate evasion and prevarication to them personally, as well as outrage after outrage upon the property, and still more, upon the lives of very many American citizens.

We shall happily still have an opportunity to prove that **friendship in our daily attitude and actions toward the millions of men and women of German birth** [38] and native sympathy who live among us and share our life, and we shall be proud to prove it toward all who are in fact loyal to their neighbors and to the Government in the hour of test. They are most of them as true and loyal Americans as if they had never known any other fealty or allegiance. They will be prompt to stand with us in rebuking and restraining the few who may be of a different mind and purpose. If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with with a firm hand of stern repression; [39] but if it lifts its head at all, it will lift it only here and there and without countenance except from a lawless and malignant few.

[38] On April 16, 1917, President Wilson issued a proclamation in which he asserted that "alien enemies" who preserved the peace, kept the laws, and gave no aid to the enemies of the United States "shall be undisturbed in the peaceful pursuit of their lives and occupations, and shall be accorded the consideration due to all peaceful and law-abiding persons, and toward such [persons] all citizens of the United States are enjoined to preserve the peace and to treat them with all such friendliness as may be compatible with loyalty and allegiance to the United States."

In May the Attorney General issued a statement congratulating the country on the friendly relations between Americans and German residents, the absence of disorders, and the necessity of interning only a very small number of persons (about 125), an insignificant fraction of the whole number of German citizens in this country.

At almost the same time the cables carried dispatches that the German police had ordered strict measures of oversight and restraint for the few Americans remaining in Germany, although all such persons were probably people whose ties with Germany made them almost more at home there than in their nominal country.

[39] The treason statutes of the United States have seldom been invoked, but they exist and possess teeth.

It is treason to "levy war against the United States, adhere to their enemies, or give them aid or comfort." (Ch. 1, sec. 1, Rev. Stat.) The penalty is death, or imprisonment for at least five years, and a fine of at least $10,000.

It is "misprision of treason" to know of any treasonable plots or doings and fail to report the same to the authorities. The penalty is seven years' imprisonment. The penalty for inciting a rebellion or insurrection is 10 years, and the crime of entering into any correspondence with a foreign government to influence it in any dispute with the United States, or to defeat any measures taken by our Government, calls for three years' imprisonment. (Ch. 1, sec. 5.) There is also a penalty of six years' imprisonment for any seditious conspiracy to oppose the authority of the United States.

All these laws President Wilson has, by recent proclamation (Apr. 6, 1917), reminded the people are in full force.

"Giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the United States" has been defined in the courts (30 Federal Cases, No. 18272), as—

"In general, any act clearly indicating a want of loyalty to the Government and sympathy with its enemies, and which by fair construction is directly in furtherance of their hostile designs." Such deeds are, of course, liable to all the penalty of treason.

In extreme cases also, of "rebellion and invasion" the Constitution specifically gives the Government power to suspend the writ of habeas corpus (Constitution, Art. I, sec. 9, par. 2); in other words, to arrest and imprison on mere suspicion without trial, and this was actually done in the Civil War.

It is a distressing and oppressive duty, gentlemen of the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful thing to lead this great, peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance.

But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts [40]—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own Governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free people as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.

[40] Abraham Lincoln (second inaugural address, 1865):

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in—to bind up one another's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Friedrich von Bernhardi (German lieutenant general, and acceptable mouthpiece, not of the whole German nation, but of the Prussian military caste which holds the German nation in its grip):

"Might is at once the supreme right, and the dispute as to what is right is decided by the arbitrament of war" (p. 23).

The idea is presumptuous that "the weak nation is to have the same right to live as a powerful and vigorous nation" (p. 34).

"The inevitableness, the idealism, and the blessedness of war as the indispensable and stimulating law of development must be repeatedly emphasized" (p. 37).

"Our people must learn to feel that the maintenance of peace never can or may be the goal of a policy" (p. 37, "*Germany and the Next War*").

Which of these two national viewpoints is to be allowed to dominate the world?

To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured.

God helping her, she can do no other.

A COMPACT SUMMARY OF THE GRIEVANCES OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE NECESSITY OF WAR.

Indictment of German policy by Mr. G. E. Foss, of Illinois, a Member of Congress (debate in House of Representatives, Apr. 6, 1917):

"As a reward for our neutrality what have we received at the hands of William II?

"He has set the torch of the incendiary to our factories, our workshops, our ships, and our wharves.

"He has laid the bomb of the assassin in our munition plants and the holds of our ships.

"He has sought to corrupt our manhood with a selfish dream of peace when there is no peace.

"He has willfully butchered our citizens on the high seas.

"He has destroyed our commerce.

"He seeks to terrorize us with his devilish policy of frightfulness.

"He has violated every canon of international decency and set at naught every solemn treaty and every precept of international law.

"He has plunged the world into the maddest orgy of blood, rapine, and murder which history records.

"He has intrigued against our peace at home and abroad.

"He seeks to destroy our civilization. Patience is no longer a virtue, further endurance is cowardice, submission to Prussian demands is slavery."

○

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 020 913 089 0